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## **Patterson Passes ‘Penalties for Polluters’ Package**

### *“Polluters will Pay!” Patterson Declares*

LANSING—State Sen. Bruce Patterson announced today the passage of Senate Bills 46, 47 and 568 which increase penalties for polluting Michigan’s waters. Patterson, the sponsor of the bills, also announced an amendment was added to include anyone who fails to report a chemical spill in a timely manner.

“Last April, people in the downriver area of Wayne County awoke to find that an oil spill had occurred in the Detroit and Rouge Rivers,” said Patterson. “While we came to learn that more than 250,000 gallons of oil had been spilled, we still don’t know who is responsible. This package will help find polluters and hold them accountable for their actions. Stiffer fines and tougher penalties will help get polluters to clean up their act!”

The bills provide a civil fine of not less than \$50,000 per violation for each day the violation occurs. In addition, the “Penalties for Polluters” package allows citizens to get involved. Senate Bill 568 provides that the Department of Environmental Quality could pay a reward of up to \$10,000 to a citizen who helps bring polluters to justice.

The bills increase fines and add a new violation for “catastrophic discharges” into the state’s waters. It is broadly defined to include any discharge or disposal of a substance into the waters of the state that causes or may cause a serious resource impairment or serious impairment to the public’s health, safety or welfare.

Senate Bills 46, 47 and 568 passed the without opposition.

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Comments from Sen. Patterson on the pollution penalties package are available for download on the Senate Majority Audiowire at [www.senate.michigan.gov/gop](http://www.senate.michigan.gov/gop) or by calling the radio hotline at 517-373-4000.